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## Powell Ranger District

# Bridge Fire

# FACT SHEET

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**UPDATE:** September 4, 2007

**DATE OF DETECTION:** July 25, 2007

**CAUSE:** Lightning

**CONTAINMENT:** 0%

**LOCATION:** This **42,250-acre** fire is located within the Clearwater National Forest two miles north of the Elk Summit Guard Station and approximately 9 miles southeast of Powell, Idaho.

**BRIDGE FIRE STATUS:** There was a change in size on the Bridge Fire Monday with most of the growth on the northeastern edge of the fire. The fire is now at the Idaho-Montana border and the boundary with the Bitterroot National Forest. Fire managers on both sides of the border are coordinating management of the fire. Monday they observed group “torching” (burning of a tree’s foliage from the bottom up) and short-range “spotting” (sparks or embers start new fires beyond the main fire) as well as short runs of fire activity.

The fire burned beyond Colt Killed Creek and is now in the Garnet and Packbox Creek drainages in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. The fire’s southern edge is holding at Big Sand Creek. There was minimal activity on the west edge of the fire Monday.

**RESOURCES:** A Type III Incident Commander, Barry Ruklic, is assigned to manage the fire with the Powell Ranger District. The Powell District initial attack crew is assisting with the fire. Fire personnel and lookouts are monitoring fire activity from safe locations. Fire activity is currently consistent with the long-term management plan for the fire.

**AREA CLOSURES:** There is an area closure around the Bridge Fire. It extends north to the Beaver Ridge Road 369 and includes the Elk Summit Road 360. Area closure maps are posted at campgrounds and trailheads on the Powell Ranger District. The public is asked to please refrain from entering this area. For further information about campgrounds or the area closure, contact the Powell Ranger Station at 208-942-3113.

**FIRE RESTRICTIONS:** Stage 1 fire restrictions are currently in effect for all Clearwater National Forest lands. Restrictions for the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness are slightly different than non-wilderness lands. Contact the Powell Ranger Station for details.

**BACKGROUND:** The Bridge Fire was started by a lightning strike July 25. Firefighters initially responded to the fire by stopping its spread west toward Elk Summit Road 360 until all people were evacuated from trails and campsites along the road. Structure protection was initiated for the Elk Summit Guard Station and outbuilding, as well as five wooden bridges in the area. When structure protection was completed, active firefighting efforts were reduced due to (1) an inability to access the fire’s remote location in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, (2) the low probability of containment, and (3) the danger of putting firefighters at risk because of extreme fire behavior. The fire is now being monitored and evaluated daily by fire lookouts and fire personnel on the Powell Ranger District. Scarce firefighting resources are being mobilized to other high priority fires that are threatening life and property. The public will be affected by smoke from the fire as well as area closures around the fire, limiting access to desired recreation areas. The fire will likely burn until there is a significant, season-ending weather event. If you have questions regarding the management of this fire, please contact Powell District Ranger, Chad Benson.

**INFORMATION:** For more information, log onto [www.incweb.org](http://www.incweb.org), the Clearwater National Forest website [www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater](http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater) or call the Powell Ranger Station at 208-942-3113.